

Meeting Notes

December 1, 2000

9:30 – 12:30

Attendance

Council members:

Gretchen White, Chair, Department of Transportation
Reg Clarke, Washington Association of Pupil Transportation
Sue Carnahan, alternate for Tom Kelly, Office of the
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Liz Dunbar, Department of Social and Health Services
Glen Hallman, Consumer Representative
Marlaina Lieberg, Consumer Representative
Doreen Marchione, Hopelink, representing CTA-NW and the
Washington Association of Community Action
Agencies
Dave O'Connell, alternate for Michael Harbour, Intercity
Transit, representing Washington State Transit
Association

Legislative Members:

Senator Georgia Gardner
Senator Jim Horn
Senator Marilyn Rasmussen

Staff members:

Barbara Davis, WSDOT	Cathy Silins, WSDOT
Debra Mendoza, ACCT	Gordon Kirkemo, WSDOT
Jim Erlandson, ACCT	Jeanne Ward, ACCT

Welcome and introductions

Gretchen White welcomed everyone to the meeting. Audience members were encouraged to join the discussion at any point. John Nichols took digital pictures of the council to include in the final ACCT Report to the legislature.

Meeting notes from ACCT October 6, 2000

The council approved the October 6, 2000 meeting notes.

Amendment to the By-laws to include an outcome statement

The By-Laws were accepted by council consensus with the following amendments:
Outcome statement: Option 2 & 3 combined: Through coordination we can improve access and mobility to those who cannot transport themselves or purchase transportation, such as the elderly, low income, children and people with disabilities. This will allow them access to jobs, education, and needed goods and services.

Review and approval of draft legislation on the State's role and responsibility for special transportation needs *Senator Gardner & Council*

Jeanne Ward presented the four options of draft legislation language on the state's role and responsibility for special transportation needs. Senator Gardner recommended a broad statement of state interest rather than a more specific option. Senator Rasmussen and Liz Dunbar agreed with that approach.

Option 1, to add the 47.06B.010 intent language to chapter 47.06B was accepted by Council consensus to read as follows:

47.06B.010 Intent

The legislature recognizes the state has a responsibility to address transportation needs for persons with special transportation needs.

The ACCT Report to the Legislature will include a recommendation to amend statute to include this language. Senator Gardner offered to introduce a bill to make this amendment to statute.

Special Transportation Needs Study Outcomes *presented by Faith Trimble*

Study Findings and Recommendations

Faith Trimble, a consultant under contract with ACCT and the Development Disabilities Council to conduct a study on Special Transportation Needs, presented the draft findings of the study as well as the draft recommendations of the Steering Committee that has overseen the progress of the study. Faith requested that the council give specific acceptance of the recommendations, feedback and direction on how to move forward with the study and deliverance to the legislature.

She announced that the final Steering Committee Meeting of the study will be on December 14th, at which time they will review feed back from the council on the draft and make final recommendations. Recommendations by the Steering Committee and PACT are as follows:

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Study Question #1:

Is there a state role and responsibility in addressing special transportation needs?

Study Findings

Based on the following finding of the Special Transportation Needs Study, the steering committee determined that the state in partnership with federal, local and regional governments has a role and responsibility in addressing special transportation needs.

People with special transportation needs living in rural and suburban areas are particularly isolated and are often trapped in their homes due to a lack of transportation.

ACCT has successfully begun the first steps of developing cooperation between state agencies, providing assistance to local coordinated transportation forums, and funding successful demonstration projects. However, sufficient funds are not available to allow ACCT and the local coordinated transportation forums to carry out the vast responsibilities.

Public transit systems serving communities at-large and specialized public transportation systems are interdependent. The strength or weakness of a general public transit system has a corresponding affect on a specialized public transportation system, and vice versa.

PACT Forum Response

Nancy Hanna and Diane Kessel representing the Program for Agency Coordinated Transportation (PACT) gave an overview of the concerns and recommendations from the PACT Forum on the Special Transportation Needs Study findings and recommendations.

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Study Findings – Transit and special transportation interdependent (2nd paragraph)

Since passage of Initiative 695, state funding **for** transit **systems** has been severely impacted. Reduced transit service levels have consequently severely impacted special transportation delivery mechanisms, and the people that rely on them.

Not only is there a state role and responsibility but also a local government role and responsibility in addressing special transportation needs.

Recommendations to the Legislature

Adopt the policy statement that comes out of this council in regards to recognizing that the state does have a role and responsibility in addressing special transportation needs.

Address the crisis in public transportation by reinstating the state funding of public transit systems.

With new and existing general fund and transportation dollars fund a basic level of mobility and access for all communities, including those with existing public transit systems.

PACT Forum Response

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Recommendations to the Legislature (number 5)

Give financial incentives to private entities to invest in specialized public transportation, **including, but not limited to, business tax breaks.**

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Recommendations to Others

When considering the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation, the Governor is encouraged to ensure **the state's responsibility for** funding public transportation.

Senator Gardner recommended making this statement regardless of the timing and to continue making this statement over and over again until everything is finalized.

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Expected Outcomes (4th paragraph)

Likewise, investment in a coordinated transportation system is expected to provide more rides for people with special transportation needs at a lower cost **per trip.**

CENTRAL POINT OF RESPONSIBILITY

Study Question #2:

Is there a need for a centralized point of responsibility for special needs transportation in the state of Washington?

If so, what would it look like, what kind of authorities would it have, what would it do, how would it be funded? Is there a need for coordination, funding, accountability and for actual service delivery?

Study Findings

The Steering Committee agreed that ACCT is, and should continue to be the central point of responsibility for coordination.

PACT Forum Response

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Study Findings (4th paragraph)

To further facilitate coordination, ACCT is encouraged to give the following tasks priority:

The PACT Forum used the word further to acknowledge that ACCT is facilitating coordination at this time.

(g. was deleted)

The Special Transportation Needs Study identified the funding flow of current federal and state funds being expended on special transportation needs. Most funding sources are categorical and specific to each program. To consolidate these funds under a central point of responsibility was found to be unmanageable and undesirable at this point in time.

The steering committee agreed that, in the event the Legislature appropriates new funds for the purpose of addressing special transportation needs **that are not tied to existing structures and programs**, ACCT should be the central point of responsibility to administer those funds.

The steering committee agreed that if ACCT is responsible for administering any new state funding for special transportation needs, ACCT should also be responsible for ensuring that recipients **of funds** are held accountable for increasing the number of rides for the transportation disadvantaged.

The Special Transportation Needs Study identified several alternative coordinated transportation delivery systems from other states as well as a pilot project in central Puget Sound. The steering committee determined that, at this point in time, it is premature to identify a central point of responsibility for **operating** a statewide special transportation service delivery system.

Recommendations to the Legislature

- Appropriate the ACCT budget request of \$9.5 million for the 2001-03 biennium, which would support ACCT administration and local coordinated transportation planning and implementation.
- Invest in additional public transportation services for people with special transportation needs, in accordance with The Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation final recommendations. A cost of \$80 million is anticipated.
- Provide ACCT with the responsibility of administering any new state funding not tied to existing categorical structures and programs and that is designated for a basic level of mobility and access for the transportation disadvantaged in all communities.

PACT Forum Response

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Expected Outcomes (1st paragraph)

With sufficient funding, it is expected that ACCT and the local coordinated transportation forums will develop a coordinated transportation infrastructure **in partnership with state agencies and programs**. The infrastructure is expected to provide all transportation disadvantaged with an efficient, easy-to-use transportation system that provides more rides to more places **for a lower cost per trip**.

It is anticipated that the coordinated infrastructure will be in place and operating independently by the year **2008** at which time the services of ACCT will no longer be needed and will be allowed to sunset.

PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Study Question #3:

How is public transportation used by people of developmental disabilities and what are the needs and challenges of people with developmental disabilities, their transportation needs, and how would we solve all of those transportation problems? This portion was supported by the Developmental Disabilities Council

Study Findings:

The Special Transportation Needs Study identified that many of the transportation needs of people with developmental disabilities are similar to others that are transportation disadvantaged.

Recommendations to the Legislature

Provide funding for:

- Increased public information, available in alternative formats, which addresses common misconceptions about public transportation and people with disabilities.
- Increased in-state and out-of-state travel mobility training for individuals with developmental disabilities, including peer or “bus buddy” training.
- Development of a new structure, or expansion of the current car pool structure, to encourage shared-rides with individuals who own wheelchair accessible vans.
- Inclusion of transportation costs as an allowable use of dollars under the Medicaid Personal Care and Community Alternative Program (CAP) waiver.

The PACT Forum supports and recommends that the report go forward.

Discussion and Decision on Forwarding the Study to the Legislature

Faith has not yet received formal approval from the Developmental Disabilities Council.

The Council by consensus adopted the recommendations made by PACT.

The Council agreed to add an additional sentence to *Chapter Seven: Roles and Responsibilities - Study Findings – Transit and special transportation interdependent (page 50)*

At this time, the state Legislature has not committed to finding a long-term funding solution for public transportation. However, the work of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation and the Governor’s initial response has been encouraging.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chapter 7 – Recommendations to the Legislature

(Page 51, number 2)

Address the statewide crisis in public transportation. In particular develop a long-term funding solution for public transit systems.

(Page 51, number 3)

With new and existing general fund and transportation multi-modal fund dollars, fund a basic level of mobility and access for the transportation disadvantaged in all communities.

A Statewide committee of policy makers and stakeholders, with local representation, would be responsible for:
(a through f)

The Council agreed to split item three, moving the committee process over to the Recommendations to Others. This section will be a recommendation to ACCT to identify some criteria with consumer representation.

Who would the statewide committee of policy makers and stakeholders be?

Senator Gardner recommended starting with ACCT as the basic group to do the work and creating a task force that would include ACCT and additional participants. This would be an expansion of ACCT and therefore, the committee could request for specific funding for the task force.

Marlaina Lieberg stated that she wants to ensure that when the task force is created that there is very strong consumer participation.

Senator Gardner recommended coming back next year when the system can be more comprehensive and identify specific areas of deficiency, specific and unmet needs and requesting that needs are not being met rather than defining specific needs.

The ACCT Coordination Grant conclusions will help determine the eligibility issues, cost, and the needs that are and are not being met.

(Page 51, number 5)

Give financial incentives to private entities to invest in special transportation including but not limited to business tax breaks.

Senator Gardner commented on this being a great idea and beneficial to both parties.

(Page 51, number 6)

Adequately fund the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) so it can make further progress towards the goals currently outlined in statute [RCW 47.06B]. Remove the section of prioritized tasks for ACCT.

Senator Gardner stated that giving a list to the legislature could be counter productive. Rather than being specific she recommended making the budget request in the same format that was done in the past.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chapter 7 – Recommendations to Others

(Page 52, number 1)

The Council requested that Faith rewrite this section to include that the state has a role to ensure responsibility not that it is the sole responsibility of the state but that it is a joint partnership, being clear about the Council's advocacy.

Central Point of Responsibility

Jeanne Ward gave an overview of the findings and recommendations.

Service Delivery Models

The DSHS brokerage model has a lot of promise for expansion and ability to do more. It is also important to keep in mind that there are many other transportation systems that also have roles and responsibilities that need to be included. We do not want people to be looking at the expansion of the brokerage system as our only vehicle for doing this.

Central Point of Responsibility

Chapter 7 – Recommendations to the Legislature

People with Developmental Disabilities

Recommendations to the Legislature

Jeanne Ward recommended that the DD Council be the body to scrutinize this section of the report.

Senator Rasmussen recommended increasing public awareness as to where the money comes from due to people having so many different perceptions.

Faith will be sending back her response, which will include the Council's suggestions as well as the work on the Disabilities Council. The council will have the opportunity to comment on the text to the report within the next couple of weeks.

The Council requested to review the report, which will include all changes before agreeing to send the final report to the Legislature.

Gretchen expressed her appreciation to the PACT for their coordinated response.

Review and approval of the ACCT II 2000 Report to the Legislature

Barbara Davis gave an overview of changes and comments made to the ACCT Report.

Glen Hallman gave his acceptance of the executive summary.

What is ACCT doing to stretch resources?

The following pieces were added to the report:

Incentives

Jeanne Ward explained the need for incentives. It is very hard to keep people engaged and their energy and excitement level up to developing our community coordinated system when there is no operating money. By offering incentives such as demonstration projects, which add to services, we will be able to operate our system and deliver more services to our community. By using the funding ACCT gets to provide those kinds of incentives helps to keep communities motivated and working.

Prioritize cost tracking and data collection

In the next two years ACCT will prioritize the tasks of identifying and tracking transportation services, costs, developing reporting criteria, and measuring cost-efficiencies. Jeanne Ward explained that this is a common question that is asked by the Legislature.

Gretchen thanked Barbara for all of her hard work on the Report.

By Consensus the Council approved the publishing of the Report.

Meeting adjourned



Summary of council decisions:

1. The amendment to the By-Laws was adopted by the Council.
2. By Council consensus, 47.06B.010 intent language was added to chapter 47.06B.
3. By consensus the Council adopted the PACT Forum recommendations to the Special Transportation Needs Study.
4. By Consensus the Council approved the publishing of the ACCT II 2000 Report to the Legislature.

Next regular council meeting

Friday, February 2, 2001
9:30–12:30

DOT Commission Board Room (1D22)
310 Maple Park Avenue, SE
Olympia, Washington 98504-7387

For questions regarding grant administration, policy and council activities, contact Jeanne Ward, ACCT Administrator, at 360-705-7917 or wardje@wsdot.wa.gov. For information on meetings, agendas, materials, and clerical issues, contact Debra Mendoza, ACCT Secretary, at 360-705-7911 or Mendozd@wsdot.wa.gov.